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SERIES

NOVEMBER

VOL.  
8

"THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM  
YEAR TO YEAR."

# All the Year Round

a  
Weekly Journal

CONDUCTED BY

CHARLES DICKENS

WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED

"HOUSEHOLD WORDS"

PART 48.

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1872

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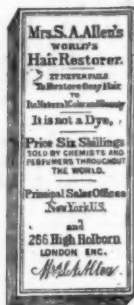
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## WILLING TO DIE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE ROSE AND THE KEY."

### CHAPTER XIII. MEETING IN THE GARDEN.

I WAS a little shy, as country misses are; and, curious as I was, rather relieved when I heard that the shipwrecked stranger had been ordered to keep his quarters strictly, for that day, at least. So, by-and-bye, as Laura Grey had a letter to write, I put on my hat, and not caring to walk toward the town, and not daring to take the Penruthyn road, I ran out to the garden.

The garden of Malory is one of those monastic enclosures whose fruit-trees have long grown into venerable timber, whose walls are stained by time, and mantled in some places with ivy; where everything has been allowed, time out of mind, to have its own way; where walks are grass-grown, and weeds choke the intervals between old standard pear, and cherry, and apple-trees, and only a little plot of ground is kept in cultivation by a dawdling, desultory man, who carries in his daily basket of vegetables to the cook.

There was a really good ribston-pippin or two in this untidy, but not unpicturesque garden; and these trees were, I need scarcely tell you, a favourite resort of ours.

The gale had nearly stripped the trees of their ruddy honours, and thrifty Thomas Jones had, no doubt, carried the spoil away to store them in the apple-closet. One pippin only dangled still within reach, and I was whacking at this particularly good-looking apple with a long stick, but as yet in vain, when I suddenly perceived that a young man, whom I recognised as the very hero of the shipwreck, was approaching. He walked slowly and a little lame, and was leaning on a stick. He was smiling, and,

detected in my undignified and rather greedy exercise—I had been jumping from the ground—I was ready to sink into the earth with shame. Perhaps, if I had been endowed with presence of mind, I should have walked away. But I was not, on that occasion, at least; and I stood my ground, stick in hand, affecting not to see his slow advance.

It was a soft sunny day. He had come out without a hat; he had sent to Cardylion to procure one, and had not yet got it, as he afterwards told me, with an apology for seeming to make himself so very much at home.

How he introduced himself I forget; I was embarrassed and disconcerted; I know that he thanked me very much for my "hospitality," called me his "hostess," smiling, and told me that although he did not know my father, he yet saw him everywhere during the season. Then he talked of the wreck; he described his own adventures very interestingly, and spoke of the whole thing in terms very different from those reported by Doctor Mervyn, and with a great deal of feeling.

He asked me if I had seen anything of it from our house; and then it became my turn to speak. I very soon got over my shyness; he was so perfectly well-bred, that it was impossible even for a rustic, such as I was, not to feel very soon quite at her ease in his company.

So I talked away, becoming more animated, and he smiled, looking at me, I thought, with a great deal of sympathy, and very much pleased.

I thought him very handsome. He had one point of resemblance to Mr. Carmel. His face was pale, but, unlike his, as dark as a gipsy's. Its tint showed the white of his eyes and his teeth with fierce effect.



What was the character of the face I saw now? Very different from the death-like phantom that had crossed my sight the night before. It was a face of passion and daring. A broad, low forehead, and resolute mouth, with that pronounced under-jaw which indicates sternness and decision. I contrasted him secretly with Mr. Carmel. But in his finely-cut features, and dark, fierce eyes, the ascetic and noble interest of the sadder face was wanting; but there was, for so young a person as I, a different and a more powerful fascination in the beauty of this young man of the world.

Before we parted I allowed him to knock down the apple I had been trying at, and this rustic service improved our acquaintance.

I began to think, however, that our interview had lasted quite long enough; so I took my leave, and I am certain he would have accompanied me to the house, had I not taken advantage of his lameness, and walked away very quickly.

As I let myself out at the garden door, in turning I was able, unsuspected, to steal a parting look, and I saw him watching me intently as he leaned against the stem of a gigantic old pear-tree. It was rather pleasant to my vanity to think that I had made a favourable impression upon the interesting stranger.

Next day our guest met me again, near the gate of the avenue, as I was returning to the house.

"I had a call this morning from your clergyman," he said. "He seems a very kind old gentleman, the rector of Cardyllion; and the day is so beautiful, he proposed a sail upon the estuary, and if you were satisfied with him, by way of escort, and my steering—I'm an old sailor—I'm sure you'd find it just the day to enjoy a little boating."

He looked at me, smiling eagerly.

Laura Grey and I had agreed that nothing would tempt us to go upon the water, until all risk of lighting upon one of those horrible discoveries from the wreck, that were now beginning to come to the surface from hour to hour, was quite over.

So I made our excuses as best I could, and told him that since the storm we had a horror of sailing.

He looked vexed and gloomy. He walked beside me.

"Oh, I understand, Miss Grey? I was not aware—I ought, of course, to have included her. Perhaps your friend would change her mind and induce you to reconsider your decision. It is such a charming day."

I thanked him again, but our going was quite out of the question.

He smiled and bowed a little, but looked very much chagrined.

I fancied that he thought I meant to snub him, for proposing any such thing on so very slight an acquaintance. I dare say if I had I should have been quite right; but you must remember how young I was, and how unlearned in the world's ways. Nothing, in fact, was further from my intention. To soften matters a little, I said:

"I am very sorry we can't go. We should have liked it, I am sure, so much; but it is quite impossible."

He walked all the way to the hall-door with me; and then he asked if I did not intend continuing my walk a little. I bid him good-bye, however, and went in, very full of the agreeable idea that I had made a conquest.

Laura Grey and I, walking to Cardyllion later, met Doctor Mervyn, who stopped to tell us that he had just seen his Malory patient, "R. R. M.," steering Williams's boat, with the old vicar on board.

"By Jove! one would have fancied he had got enough of the water for some time to come," remarked the doctor, in conclusion. "That is the most restless creature I ever encountered in all my professional experience! If he had kept himself quiet yesterday and to-day he'd have been pretty nearly right by to-morrow; but if he goes on like this I should not wonder if he worked himself into a fever."

#### CHAPTER XIV. THE INTRUDER.

NEXT morning, at about nine o'clock, whom do I see but the restless stranger, to my surprise, again upon the avenue as I return toward the house. I had run down to the gate before breakfast to meet our messenger, and learn whether any letters had come by the post. He, like myself, has come out before his breakfast. He turns on meeting me, and walks towards the house at my side. Never was man more persistent. He had got Williams's boat again, and not only the vicar, but the vicar's wife was coming for a sail; surely I would venture with her? I was to remember, beside, that they were to sail to the side of the estuary furthest from the wreck; there could be no possible danger there of what I feared—and thus he continued to argue and entreat.

I really wished to go. I said, however, that I must ask Miss Grey, whom, upon some excuse which I now forget, he re-



gretted very much he could not invite to come also.

I had given him a conditional promise by the time we parted at the hall-door, and Laura saw no objection to my keeping it, provided old Mrs. Jermyn, the vicar's wife, were there to chaperon me.

We were to embark from the Malory jetty, and she was to call for me at about three o'clock.

The shipwrecked stranger left me, evidently very well pleased.

When he got into his quarters in the steward's house and found himself alone, I dare say his dark face gleamed with the smile of which Doctor Mervyn had formed so ill an opinion. I had not yet seen that smile. Heaven help me! I have had reason to remember it.

Laura and I were sitting together, when who should enter the room but Mr. Carmel.

I stood up and shook hands. I felt very strangely. I was glad the room was a dark one. I was less observed, and therefore less embarrassed.

It was not till he had been in the room some time that I observed how agitated he looked. He seemed also very much dejected, and from time to time sighed heavily.

I saw that something had gone strangely wrong. It was a vague suspense. I was secretly very much frightened.

He would not sit down. He said he had not a moment to stay; and yet he lingered on, I fancied, debating something within himself. He was distraught, and, I thought, irresolute.

After a little talk, he said, "I came just to look in on my old quarters and see my old friends for a few minutes, and then I must disappear again for more than a month, and I find a gentleman in possession."

We hastened to assure him that we had not expected him home for some time, and that the stranger was admitted but for a few days. We told him, each contributing something to the narrative, all about the shipwreck, and the reception of the forlorn survivor in the steward's house.

He listened without a word of comment, almost without breathing, and with his eyes fixed in deep attention on the floor.

"Has he made your acquaintance?" he asked, raising them to me.

"He introduced himself to me," I answered, "but Miss Grey has not seen him."

Something seemed to weigh heavily upon his mind.

"What is your father's present address?" he asked.

I told him, and he made a note of it in his pocket-book. He stood up now, and did at length take his leave.

"I am going to ask you to do a very kind thing. You have heard of sealed orders, not to be opened till a certain point has been reached in a voyage or a march? Will you promise, until I shall have left you fully five minutes, not to open this letter?"

I almost thought he was jesting, but I perceived very quickly that he was perfectly serious. Laura Grey looked at him curiously and gave him the desired promise as she received the note. His carriage was at the door, and in another minute he was driving rapidly down the avenue.

What had led to these odd precautions, and what had they to do with the shipwrecked stranger?

At about eleven o'clock, that is to say, about ten minutes before Mr. Carmel's visit to us, the stranger had been lying on a sofa in his quarters, with two ancient and battered novels from Austin's library in Cardyllion, when the door opened unceremoniously, and Mr. Carmel, in travelling costume, stepped into the room. The hall-door was standing open, and Mr. Carmel, on alighting from his conveyance, had walked straight in without encountering any one in the hall.

On seeing an intruder in possession he stopped short; the gentleman on the sofa, interrupted, turned towards the door. Thus confronted, each stared at the other.

"Ha, Marston!" exclaimed the ecclesiastic, with a startled frown, and an almost incredulous stare.

"Edwyn! by Jove!" responded the stranger, with a rather anxious smile, which faded, however, in a moment.

"What on earth brings you here?" said Mr. Carmel, sternly, after a silence of some seconds.

"What the devil brings you here?" inquired the stranger, almost at the same moment. "Who sent you? What is the meaning of it?"

Mr. Carmel did not approach him. He stood where he had first seen him, and his looks darkened.

"You are the last man living I should have looked for here," said he.

"I suppose we shall find out what we mean by-and-bye," said Marston, cynically; "at present I can only tell you that when I saw you I honestly thought a certain old gentleman, I don't mean the devil had sent you in search of me."

Carmel looked hard at him. "I've grown a very dull man since I last saw you, and I don't understand a joke as well as I once did," said he; "but if you are serious you cannot have learned that this house has been lent to me by Mr. Ware, its owner, for some months at least; and these, I suppose, are your things? There is not room to put you up here."

"I didn't want to come; I am the famous man you may have read of in the papers—quite unique—the man who escaped alive from the Conway Castle; no Christian refuses shelter to the shipwrecked; and you are a Christian, though an odd one."

Edwyn Carmel looked at him for some seconds in silence.

"I am still puzzled," he said; "I don't know whether you are serious; but, in any case, there's a good hotel in the town; you can go there."

"Thank you—without a shilling," laughed the young man, a little wickedly.

"A word from me will secure you credit there."

"But I'm in the doctor's hands, don't you see?"

"It is nothing very bad," answered Mr. Carmel; "and you will be nearer the doctor there."

The stranger, sitting up straight, replied: "I suppose I should; but the doctor likes a walk, and I don't wish him a bit nearer."

"But this is, for the time being, my house, and you must go," replied Edwyn Carmel, coldly and firmly.

"It is also my house, for the time being; for Miss Ware has given me leave to stay here."

The ecclesiastic's lips trembled, and his pale face grew paler, as he stared on the young man for a second or two in silence.

"Marston," he said, "I don't know, of all men, why you should specially desire to pain me."

"Why, hang it! Why should I wish to pain you, Edwyn? I don't. But I have no notion of this sort of hectoring. The idea of your turning me out of the—my house—the house they have lent me! I told you, I didn't want to come here; and now I don't want to go away, and I won't."

The churchman looked at him, as if he strove to read his inmost thoughts.

"You know that your going to the hotel could involve no imaginable trouble," urged Edwyn Carmel.

"Go to the hotel yourself, if you think it so desirable a place. I am satisfied with this, and I shall stay here."

"What can be the motive of your obstinacy?"

"Ask that question of yourself, Mr. Carmel, and you may possibly obtain an answer," replied the stranger.

The priest looked again at him, in stern doubt.

"I don't understand your meaning," he said, at last.

"I thought my meaning pretty plain. I mean that I rather think our motives are identical."

"Honestly, Marston, I don't understand you," said Mr. Carmel, after another pause.

"Well, it is simply this; that I think Miss Ware a very interesting young lady, and I like being near her—don't you?"

The ecclesiastic flushed crimson; Marston laughed contemptuously.

"I have been away for more than a month," said the priest, a little paler, looking up angrily: "and I leave this to-day for as long a time again."

"Conscious weakness! weakness of that sentimental kind sometimes runs in families," said the stranger, with a sneer. It was plain that the stranger was very angry: the taunt was wicked, and, whatever it meant, stung Mr. Carmel visibly. He trembled, with a momentary quiver, as if a nerve had been pierced.

There was a silence, during which Mr. Carmel's little French clock over the chimney-piece, punctually wound every week by old Rebecca, might be heard sharply tick, tick, ticking.

"I shall not be deterred by your cruel tongue," said he, very quietly, at length, with something like a sob, "from doing my duty."

"Your duty! Of course, it is always duty: jealousy is quite unknown to a man in holy orders. But there is a difference. You can't tell the least what I'm thinking of; you always suppose the worst of every one. Your duty! And what, pray, is your duty?"

"To warn Miss Ware, and her government," he answered promptly.

"Warn her of what?" said the stranger, sternly.

"Warn her that a villain has got into this house."

The interesting guest sprang to his feet, with his fist clenched. But he did not strike. He hesitated, and then he said:

"Look here; I'll not treat you as I would a man. You wish me to strike you, you Jesuit, and to get myself into hot water. But I shan't make a fool of

myself. I tell you what I'll do with you. If you dare to injure me in the opinion of any living creature, by one word of spoken or hinted slander, I'll make it a police-office affair; and I'll bring out the whole story you found it on; and we'll see which suffers most, you or I, when the world hears it. And now, Mr. Carmel, you're warned. And you know I'm a fellow that means what he says."

Mr. Carmel turned with a pale face, and left the room.

I wonder what the stranger thought. I have often pondered over that scene; and, I believe, he really thought that Mr. Carmel would not, on reflection, venture to carry out his threat.

#### CHAPTER XV. A WARNING.

WE had heard nothing of Mr. Carmel's arrival. He had not passed our windows, but drove up instead by the back avenue; and now he was gone, and there remained no record of his visit but the letter which Laura held in her fingers, while we both examined it at all sides, and turned it over. It was directed: "To Miss Ware and Miss Grey. Malory." And when we opened it we read these words:

DEAR YOUNG LADIES,—I know a great deal of the gentleman who has been permitted to take up his residence in the house adjoining Malory. It is enough for me to assure you that no acquaintance could be much more objectionable and unsafe, especially for young ladies living alone as you do. You cannot, therefore, exercise too much caution in repelling any advances he may make.

Your true friend,  
E. CARMEL.

The shock of reading these few words, prevented my speaking for some seconds. I had perfect confidence in Mr. Carmel's warning. I was very much frightened. And the vagueness of his language made it the more alarming. The same thoughts struck us both. What fools we were! How is he to be got out of the house? Whom have we to advise with? What is to be done?

In our first panic we fancied that we had got a burglar or an assassin under our roof. Mr. Carmel's letter, however, on consideration, did not bear out quite so violent a conclusion. We resolved, of course, to act upon that letter; and I blamed myself too late for having permitted

the stranger to make, even in so slight a way, my acquaintance.

In great trepidation, I despatched a note to Mrs. Jermyn, to say I could not join her boating party. To the stranger I could send neither note nor message. It did not matter. He would, of course, meet that lady at the jetty, and there learn my resolve.

Two o'clock arrived. Old Rebecca came in, and told us that the gentleman in the steward's house had asked her whether Mr. Carmel was gone; and on learning that he had actually driven away, hardly waited till she was out of the room "to burst out a-laughing," and talking to himself, and laughing like mad.

"And I don't think, with his laughing and cursing, he's like a man should be that fears God, and is only a day or two out of the jaws of death!"

This description increased our nervousness. Possibly this person was a lunatic, whose keeper had been drowned in the Conway Castle! There was no solution of the riddle which Mr. Carmel had left us to read, however preposterous, that we did not try; none possible, that was not alarming.

About an hour after, passing through the hall, I saw some one, I thought, standing outside, near the window that commands the steps beside the door. This window has a wire-blind through which, from outside, it is impossible to see. From within, however, looking towards the light, you can see perfectly. I scarcely thought our now distrusted guest would presume to approach our door so nearly; but there he was. He had mounted the steps, I suppose, with the intention of knocking, but he was, instead, looking stealthily from behind the great elm that grows close beside; his hand was leaning upon its trunk, and his whole attention absorbed in watching some object which, judging from the direction of his gaze, must have been moving upon the avenue. I could not take my eyes off him. He was frowning, with compressed lips, and eyes dilated; his attitude betokened caution, and as I looked, he smiled darkly.

I recovered my self-possession. I took, directly, Doctor Mervyn's view of that very peculiar smile. I was suddenly frightened. There was nothing to prevent the formidable stranger from turning the handle of the door and letting himself into the hall.

Two or three light steps brought me to the door, and I instantly bolted it. Then drawing back a little into the hall, I looked

again through the window, but the intending visitor was gone.

Who had occupied his gaze the moment before? And what had determined his retreat?

It flashed upon me suddenly again, that he might be one of those persons who are described as "being known to the police," and that Mr. Carmel had possibly sent constables to arrest him.

I waited breathlessly at the window, to see what would come of it. In a minute more, from the direction in which I had been looking for a party of burly policemen, there arrived only my fragile friend, Laura Grey, who had walked down the road to see whether Mr. and Mrs. Jermyn were coming.

Encouraged by this reinforcement, I instantly opened the hall-door, and looked boldly out. The enemy had completely disappeared.

"Did you see him?" I exclaimed.

"See whom?" she asked.

"Come in quickly," I answered. And when I had shut the hall-door, and again bolted it, I continued, "The man in the steward's house. He was on the steps this moment."

"No, I did not see him; but I was not looking toward the hall-door. I was looking up at the trees, counting the broken boughs—there are thirteen trees injured on the right side, as you come up."

"Well, I vote we keep the door bolted; he shan't come in here," said I. "This is the second siege you and I have stood together in this house. I do wish Mr. Carmel had been a little more communicative, but I scarcely think he would have been so unfriendly as to leave us quite to ourselves if he had thought him a highwayman, and certainly, if he is one, he is a very gentleman-like robber."

"I think he can merely have meant, as he says, to warn us against making his acquaintance," said Miss Grey; "his letter says only that."

"I wish Mr. Carmel would stay at home," I said, "or else that the steward's house were locked up."

I suppose all went right about the boating party, and that Mrs. Jermyn got my note in good time.

No one called at Malory; the dubious stranger did not invade our steps again. We had constant intelligence of his movements from Rebecca Torkill; and there was nothing eccentric or suspicious about them, so far as we could learn.

Another evening passed, and another morning came; no letter by the post, Rebecca hastened to tell us, for our involuntary guest; a certain sign, she conjectured, that we were to have him for another day. Till money arrived he could not, it was plain, resume his journey.

Doctor Mervyn told us, with his customary accuracy and plenitude of information respecting other people's affairs, when he looked in upon us, after his visit to his patient, that he had posted a letter the morning after his arrival, addressed to Lemuel Blount, Esquire, 5, Brunton-street, Regent's Park, and that on reference to the London Directory, in the news-room, it was duly ascertained by the subscribers, that "Blount, Lemuel" was simply entered, as "Esquire," without any further clue whatsoever to guide an active-minded and inquiring community to a conclusion. So there, for the present, Doctor Mervyn's story ended.

Our panic by this time was very much allayed. The unobtrusive conduct of the unknown ever since his momentary approach to our side of the house, had greatly contributed to this. I could not submit to a blockade of any duration; so we took heart of grace, and ventured to drive in the little carriage to Cardyllion, where we had some shopping to do.

## THE CUPBOARD PAPERS.

### III. A FLEMISH MARKET.

ROUND about the famous Antwerp blacksmith's masterpiece in iron, wrought without the help of a file, some four hundred years ago, there is chattering and chaffering under the square-cut Flemish hats and the prodigious lappels, very much as there was when Quentin Matsys set it up in the great market-place over the well, crowning it with Antigon's hand, cast by Salvius Brabon.

Marketing is everywhere. It stretches away from St. Anthony's Hotel through the Place Verte, round the cathedral, and up all the dark and tortuous streets that lie handy; by the Canal au Fromage, the Pont aux Tourbes, the Rue de la Musette Bleue, the old Bourse and the English Bourse, the Rue du Fagot; and it broadens all over the vast old Place of the Town Hall, flanked by the quaint, elaborately ornamented corporation houses, the drapers', the coopers', the masons', the joiners', the grandest of them all; and with the highest cathedral tower in Europe for background. Over the extraordinary area of hucksterers, the sweet



bells ring out lively passages from Martha on the summer morning. It is seven o'clock, and the bargaining is at its height all over the Places, and the length of the winding streets. The market-carts are drawn up in rows; the dogs, who have brought the milk to town, are lying panting in their heavy harness, while their mistresses dispose of the cream and butter; the heavy country yokels, with their whips slung by the thong round their necks, are hugging the beer-shops; and the country women, in their becoming lappels, or crowned with the old Flemish hats, are doing a little humble marketing on their own account, with the venders of combs and mirrors and pomatum, at a few sous.

The Place Verte presents the prettiest picture. It is surrounded by groves of trees, to begin with. By these groves are two lines of white-hooded country carts, the horses in the shafts, and before each animal a mound of fresh-cut clover. They are ranged as regularly as troops on parade. While contemplating the trimness of the arrangement and the dazzling brightness of the scene, I perceive a mountain of flowers moving out of a side street towards me. Presently I catch sight of two feet paddling under the mountain, and discover that this is the startling way in which cut-flowers are carried to market at Antwerp. It is simple, and thoroughly sensible. An immense perforated frame, light as a bubble, is spread before the bouquet-builder; and, as she binds her flowers, she drops them in the rows of holes, the mountainous nose-gays taking the central places, and forming the pyramid. The floral mountain complete, a lad can carry it easily to the Place Verte, upon his head.

The groves of the Place Verte serve as a market-place for the flower-sellers of Antwerp; and there is no prettier sight within the boundaries of this town of abounding pictures, and happy surprises of Flemish and Spanish tricks of light and shade and colour, than the stalls under the trees, massed with rough branches, ponderous nose-gays (a yard and a half in circumference, I measured) and dainty bouquets, with a butterfly fastened in the centre of the sweetness. The flowers in pots are of all sizes, and the variety is extraordinary. Fuchsias nearly six feet high; the dearly-beloved oleander laughing with bud and bloom, and scattering its fragrance far and wide; the golden shafts of the sword lily; the sentimental *myosotis* (which we English never grow in pots); pink and carnation;

gigantic *marguerites*, with eyes large and full as Juno's; superb shafts and plumes of variegated grasses, which the market-women hold in a stately way. With green leaves and boughs for roof to such a market, the buyers and sellers vying with each other in picturesqueness of costume, and Rubens's stately figure towering in bronze in the background; the observer who has ordered an anchovy, an omelette aux rognons (and hopes it may approach the perfection of that dish at the Moulin Rouge in Paris), a peach, and a little Deidesheimer Riesling, to reward him for his ramble, may say that he has opened the day on a pleasant picture.

The importance of the opening of the day well is not considered in my country. I am not sure that it is in Switzerland, or Germany, or France, or Belgium; but then in these countries the opening is good, as a rule. People are out into the open at once. The streets are alive directly people are awake. Everybody gets a taste of fresh air betimes. The Frenchwoman trots out at six for her milk, for the coffee, and for the roll. Indeed, this is the rule everywhere. The continental milk purveyor stations herself under a gateway, or at a street corner, and her customers flock to her. They are active and merry, in the fresh morning air. And their masters, too, are abroad hours before the British man of business has put aside his morning paper and slippers, and got clear of the breakfast-parlour. Observe the difference between the man who has stolen half an hour on the breakfast-time, and has been sniffing and weeding about his garden, and the members of the household who have come direct from their dressing-rooms to table. The latter are flabby and gloomy; the blood has not yet got beyond a crawl through their veins; whereas he who has been hustling the roses and picking the snails from the wall, is full of brisk life.

The scene on the Place Verte before eight o'clock in the morning, is delightfully inspiring. Even the old crones and the worn-out men who beg, are not down-hearted. The market-folk chatter so cheerily, they appear to be doing business for the pleasure of the thing, under the vivifying influence of the sparkling air. Not that they are to be moved by any consideration to a sentimental bargain. They are born soldiers of the centime; and every day fight the gallant battle of the rouge liard toughly. A transaction in a pot of forget-me-not is conducted with surprising spirit.



The purchaser is an old gentleman of military aspect. What can he want with myosotis, you wonder; but he does want it, and this badly, to judge by the vehemence of his manner in bargaining. You see there is a difference between the buyer and seller, of two sous—an entire penny! You would, as a stranger observing the contention, imagine that the buyer had shamefully closed a mortgage of the seller's estate, and turned the seller's bedridden mother into the streets. The storm rises and falls; the Spartan seller closes his arms and shows his back; the martinet buyer shrugs his shoulders to express his contempt, deposits the flower-pot in its place between a pink and a marguerite, and is moving off; when the seller, with the air of a man suddenly yielding to a soft impulse—as a holy feeling of pity for instance—tells his enemy to take the flower. The bargain ended, and the forget-me-not nodding under the old man's arm, the enemies laugh together.

The business is much more serious in the Canal au Fromage, behind the cathedral, albeit the flower buying is as much part of the marketing in Antwerp as selecting the salad, or obtaining a pan plentifully endowed with cream-cheese. Stacks of birch-brooms (they are wonderfully in request here) and brushes, piles of hen, pigeon, duck, and rabbit coops, enormous baskets of fresh eggs, and stands of creamy butter in wet leaves that were picked this sunrise, line the narrow streets. You can hear the Babel of buyers and sellers in the cathedral, while you stand before the green cloths that cover Rubens's awful canvases. People come through the cathedral from the Place Verte to the real business of the market-day. The faces of the townsfolk are beaming, their tongues are wagging merrily, and everybody is deeply interested in his neighbour's bargain. I ventured, with some timidity, to open a little transaction in greengages, having made up my mind to have just a half quarteron of them in a shady spot I had noticed in the Square of Flowers. While I applied my fingers to the bloom on the soft cheeks of the fruit that had tempted me, I perceived that a country girl had fixed her eyes upon me. In another moment an idle lad peeped over her shoulders, a *bonne* leading a bouncing Flemish boy came upon the other side, a workman smoking a prodigious black pipe paused behind the fruit-woman, a soldier shaded his eyes from the sun, and stood at ease to observe how the

little matter would end. Of course I gave the woman the sum she asked, amid the contemptuous smiles of the audience; because I was anxious to cease being the observed of twenty observers in so trifling a bargain. But I had no reason for my embarrassment or ill-temper. My position as purchaser of fourteen greengages was solitary when compared with that of a lady who presently opened negotiations near me for the purchase of a barn-door cock, whose rich plumage had seen better days, and whose air of gallant misery, while he was being passed round that a general opinion might be offered as to his weight and consequent worth in sous, marked him for the Don Quixote of some wild poultry-run on the banks of the Scheldt. The gaunt, hard-featured, hungry-looking lady who held him by the wings, then by the legs, then thrust her bony fingers round his gorgeous throat, and peered into his proud eyes; who screamed her price at the countryman who had drawn the bird out of the coop for her inspection; and then, while he was going through the byplay of scorn and anger at the lowness of the offer, took counsel of the excited bystanders, and passed Chanticleer round again to have his breast pinched and his spurs examined anew; this leading lady was an old performer in the Canal au Fromage, and able to hold her own with the most turbulent old butterwoman on the Grand' Place. After an exciting contest, the noble bird went for two francs and twenty-five centimes; and the purchaser received the congratulations of the bystanders, while she was hanging the prize on her arm by a string tied about his ancient shanks, and the countryman was carefully depositing the money in his leather pouch.

I remark that the cooks who are on the Grand' Place, vigorously treating for vegetables with the morning dew upon them, carry metal market-baskets, or pails, tapering to the bottom. When I add that these are often painted green without, and a warm or very fair tint within, I shall be excused, by the English reader at least, for observing that they cut an odd figure to English eyes in a market-place. But they are very sensible pails. They keep the produce which is deposited in them cool, they are always clean and sweet, and they are not as heavy as that wicker fortress in which the Anglo-Saxon housewife will often carry a bunch of turnips. The bearers of these market-pails are exquisitely clean, their faces shine and

beam, their caps dazzle. Sturdy and brisk withal, they collect the day's dinner, the materials for the soup, the carrots, turnips, herbs, leeks; the salad, of which there are a dozen varieties; the fruit, still warm with the sun's kisses; the butter straight from the dairy; the eggs direct from the hen-house; a black radish for hors-d'œuvre (delightful with mustard, oil, or cream, and vinegar); a dish of new curds sweetened in cream for the children; and are trotting, gossiping, and laughing on the way home before monsieur leaves for his bureau, and that is at eight o'clock at the very latest.

Bread also is sold in the market, from tilted carts, and this country baking is stout wheaten food of the wholesomest description. While I stand watching the weighing of it, and enjoying the cool, mealy odour that comes from the handling of it, a soldier steps over from the smoky little guard-house of the Hôtel de Ville, and buys a lump, with which to enjoy a feed of the popular fromage à la crème, which he carries in a cabbage-leaf. I shall have a great deal to say on bread presently.

The best proof of the thrifty way in which this bright and busy crowd on the Grand' Place lives, lies in the economical soup, a soup composed of meat and vegetables, which is distributed to the indigent at the rate of eight centimes a litre—say, two farthings a quart. He who desires to know how domestic economy may be practised, and the kind of lessons which our wasteful people want just now, more than any of the School Boards are likely to give them, should explore the God's houses here, where the aged and infirm are cared for; or take a round with one of the little Sisters of the Poor, kindred of those heroic women who travel about London in their little green carts, collecting the scraps from comfortable tables to feed the old men and women they have drawn from bare garret or cellar under their holy roof. But the demand for the economical soup, which gives all the necessary elements of food to the human being, is prodigious, this I know.

I had earned my omelette.

In the court-yard of St. Anthony's Hotel a Scotch family were assembling, one by one, to breakfast at a round table in the open air. Thus far they had conformed to continental prejudices, but not an inch farther would they go. They were in solemn committee on the bacon which had been served to them. Could it be called bacon at all? Was it bacon like that Mac-

pherson sold at Aberdeen, was it even as good as MacSawney's? The feminine chief of the party, with a toss of her head, bade her gudeman to take his seat, and just be content for the moment with what Heaven had sent him, and return thanks it was no worse. The worst was—my omelette aux rognons, cooked to a turn!

I was ready to make a spring upon the party, but it was too late; the gudeman, with a sweep of the spoon, had taken two-thirds of it upon his plate, and in an instant I heard him burring over it that it was nae sae bad; but honest eggs and bacon were better.

That family will clamour for cock-a-leekie somewhere about Bingen.

#### IV. DINING WITH AMELIE.

At Janodet's. A flet of sole with muscels, a cutlet Italienne, half a partridge aux choux, and a parfait—with some of the cheery host's excellent Bordeaux. The addition, nine francs five centimes. Change out of a twenty-franc note: five-franc piece, a two-franc piece, two pieces of one franc, two pieces of fifty centimes, and one sou. Now why is this change brought to me? It is the result of perfect order, in the minds of master, dame du comptoir, and waiter.

I hope the reader has observed by this time that these Cupboard Papers of mine are a random series of observations I have made on eating and drinking, and cognate subjects—in many places, and sometimes under extraordinary circumstances. To-day I am at Stockholm (where, by the way, I once ate a delectable fish-pie, at the end of a dinner to which one of the ministers did me the honour of inviting me), next week I am in Brussels, or London, or before a dish of ferraz by Lake Lemán; or assisting at the crowning of the pumpkin of the year, among the jovial ladies—a trifle, it may be, too muscular in the elbow, of the Halles Centrales; or conducting the dissection of a Yorkshire pie in my Fin-Becquerie at home. But wherever and whenever I have made notes, be sure I have had some fair object in view. It has generally been the instruction of my poor fellow-countrymen in the art of living both reasonably and with refinement. Why have I taken notes, for instance, of my dinners enjoyed under the intelligent auspices of Amelie; and why did I take the trouble to make a memorandum at Janodet's, when most people would have given themselves up wholly to the task of diges-

tion, and looked idly out of the window, at the fallen fortunes of the Rotonde, where so many of us have enjoyed the admirable coffee that was brewed there before Baron Hausmann took Paris in hand? Now I hear the clinking of the trowels where they are cobbling the empty shell of Prince Napoleon's palace (Chevet's window hard by, let me interpose, has allowed none of its glories to pale, though who buys that prize fruit, and those quails and plovers, and trout, now, I cannot make out); and the crowd round the band and the fountain are dispersing tamely with patches of mourning upon many of them.

Well, I see in the change lying before me the solution of a problem that has been puzzling the heads of writers and talkers, and travellers generally, for many years past.

"Why, sir," Mr. Bloomsbury Baker observes, over an execrable caricature of a vol-au-vent, which with laudable enterprise he has insisted upon having out of his kitchen at Merton in Surrey; "why, sir, is it not possible to dine in London, as you and I dined one day on the Boulevards—at the Diner de Paris, for instance; and at the same price? The materials are as cheap—the fish and flesh cheaper—in this country. We have some places where you may dine at so much a head; but, ugh! Think of the pasty entrées, the leathery fritters, that greasy mess they call an omelette! What salads! Bless me, a French concierge wouldn't put his lips to the best of them a second time. Why can't it be done?"

Let me entreat Mr. Baker to remark the change for twenty francs that lies before me. It is the result of orderly minds, all acting together. Observe that Felix, the waiter, who has just brought it to me upon a shining plate, does not wait and leer about in the mean fashion of his British confrère, but is briskly off to serve the other guests. He has carried through his plan of change, and he leaves it confidently to be worked out. You see I have a sou, ten sous, twenty sous, forty sous, a hundred sous before me. I cannot leave one sou as the indication of my approval of the manner in which Felix has served me, nor can I get off with the excuse that I have no small change. I must give him ten sous. Then, again, I may be in a generous mood; I may fulfil his idea of a milord, or, better still, I may be an American, or, best of all, a Wallachian, or a Moldavian. Giving himself full advantage of every probability, he has

made the change handy to every mood of the foreign diner. An Englishman, if a milord, might give a franc, a spendthrift American two francs, a Wallachian or a Moldavian five francs.

Now all Monsieur Janodet's arrangements are of this methodical kind. Each detail has been profoundly pondered. The morning's marketing has been transacted with that system—become second nature—which underlies all French commercial operations. All classes fall in with it, understand the complex "correspondence" arrangements of the omnibuses (which failed utterly in London, because the conductors could not keep accounts on the steps of the vehicle as the French conducteur will, gossiping the while), are patient members of a queue to see the last hit at a theatre, or to subscribe to the new loan, and sit content in the horrible salles d'attente of the railways.

The charm of French order is that its rules don't jump to your eyes. You see the swan upon the water, easy, majestic, white as a summer cloud, but you are never permitted to catch sight of the dingy shanks that are paddling underneath. The service of a French dinner, like the Queen of Spain, has no legs. This ease, upon profoundly meditated order, is a delightful quality, to be enjoyed seldom save in Paris. At the great Swiss hotels, where three or four hungry tourists sit down to dinner in the season, at the Bernerhof, or Beau Rivage, for instance, there is order, but you see the springs, you mark the drill, you hear the word of command. A man of military aspect stands at the end of the room, and watches his army of waiters march along the tables with the soup. Then he retires to a side room, to which his troops follow him at the tinkling of a bell. They are ranged in files, and at a signal each takes up the dish of fish placed for him; another signal, and they pass out in line, each to his exact spot, at a table where he is to begin serving. In the rear the commandant returns, and watches keenly the evolutions of his troops. And so on to the end of the dinner, to the crude pears and peaches, and the Huntley and Palmer biscuits, which are served for dessert even in the best hotels, in cities that display in the market-places the most luscious fruits. The drill is too evident, the march of the men is too formal; in short, the machinery shows. It is excellent, it might be copied with advantage even from the coarser models of Switzerland, but it is not that ease with

perfect order of which Felix is a type, nor of deftly-regulated insouciance which prevails in the establishment of which Amelie is the favourite attendant.

Let me premise that Amelie is a fairly educated young lady, of Norman descent, I fancy, who has agreed to put aside, while in business, the fripperies of fashion, and to wear a pretty white-spotted net cap, white linen sleeves and apron over a dark grey alpaca dress. Neat as ninepence! She is full as neat as tenpence. But she has no touch or air of the coquette. She is bent on business, with a pencil tied to her girdle, and the section of tables to which she is told off, freshly laid out before her. Her customers are economists, who know what is good—a very difficult company to cater for. She has a vast amount of responsibility on hand, what with her accounts with her guests and her settlements with the comptoir. She knows the price of everything, can recommend the best fish and plat of the day, has a happy suggestion for the flagging appetite, and can pick out everybody's stick, umbrella, parasol, or hat. Her movements are swift, but noiseless. I never saw her drop a plate, or spill gravy, or get the least bit in the world out of temper, with all the head and hand work she has to perform by the hour together.

As you enter Amelie's, a person, dressed severely, like a valet, presents you with a slip of paper upon which the plat, the hors-d'œuvre, the fish, the wine, the dessert, vegetables, serviettes, ice, bread—all the separate elements of a dinner—are printed, with prices attached. Against each item is a ruled space. This paper is placed upon the table beside you.

Amelie brings you the *carte du jour* in a little frame, and observes that you look well after your country jaunt, and that it is too bad of you to have gone away for a fortnight without telling her. This, not said in the least coquettishly, but as a pleasant introduction to your little conversation as to dinner.

"Some good melon to-day," says Amelie. "Yes, and the veau Marengo is good—you shall have a bon morceau; well, with tomatoes au gratin, and some grapes, you will have eaten well, if you have no great appetite."

As Amelie brings the dishes, she makes a mark upon the slip of paper—on the plat, or fish, or vegetable line, as the case may be. In this way she will wait upon twenty guests at separate little tables, without the

least hurry, or the most distant approach to a mistake. The diners are all, or nearly all, Parisians, and mostly of the middle class. They all know what a good dinner means; and there is a peremptory return of any item served to them that is not up to their standard of fair cookery. Old gentlemen are very fond of dining under Amelie's auspices; and they are grateful when she pets the caniche that huddles under their chair. Amelie is a favourite with her own sex; for she will be at great pains to coax the appetite of any lady who cannot decide upon a dish. The dyspeptic are her peculiar care.

The establishment is comfortably fitted up; the tables are white marble. I repeat, the cooking is decidedly superior to that of an average table d'hôte, and good men feast to the right and left of you. Now let us look at my account on two occasions when I was accompanied by Petit-Bec, a young gentleman who gives promise of becoming—well, never mind. I intend to leave him my blessing, and something else into the bargain, when I die. Here is our first account:

Serviettes . . . . .	10 centimes.
Glace à rafraîchir . . . . .	10 "
Bread . . . . .	20 "
2 melons (superb slices) . . . . .	1 franc.
Veau Marengo (3) . . . . .	1 "
Tomatoes au gratin (1) . . . . .	30 centimes.
Glace, vanille (1) . . . . .	30 "
Grapes . . . . .	40 "
Peach (a noble one, with sugar) . . . . .	40 "
1 bottle of Bordeaux (a sound wine) . . . . .	1 franc.
Total . . . . .	4.80 centimes.

I handed the paper, with Amelie's marks upon it, to the severe person at a desk by the door; four sous to Amelie (if I gave her six that has nothing to do with my contention, since none of her customers, except milords, exceed two sous a head as her gratuity), and stood on the boulevards, not a stone's throw from Brebant's, with Petit-Bec, the pair of us having dined for five francs.

"That experiment, sir, must be tried again," quoth Petit-Bec to me some days after our first trial, or rather after his first introduction to Amelie.

"A la bonne heure!" Amelie chirruped, bringing our bread and serviettes. "You are going to eat," she said authoritatively to me, "some fresh sardines."

Grilled they are very good—as they have them at Biarritz and thereabouts. Well what was the bill Amelie made up for us that day?



2 Soup—pâte d'Italie . . .	40 centimes.
1 Sardines, grilled . . .	30 "
1 Lobster, Remoulade (Petit-Bec can never pass it) . . .	75 "
1 Tête de veau, vinaigrette . . .	50 "
1 Roast veal, potatoes . . .	50 "
2 Macaroni au gratin (excellent) . . .	60 "
1 Confiture of apricots . . .	20 "
1 Grapes . . .	30 "
2 Serviettes (some of the old gentle- men tie up theirs, and save the daily roll) . . .	10 "
2 Breads . . .	20 "
Bordeaux, one bottle and a half . . .	1.50 "
Total . . .	5.35 "

Amelie received thirty-five centimes in token of our content; and so we made our dinner five francs fourteen sous, whereat Petit-Bec was led to observe that we must draw in.

"Now, why can't this be done in London, I confess I should like to know?" Mr. Bloomsbury Baker observes. "It does seem to me to be preposterous that with all the appliances and means about us—"

"Pardon me, dear friend," I interpose. "But we haven't all the ways and means. Don't you see that we haven't got Amelie, and we haven't got Felix. We are deficient in what a renowned waiter once described as chalk-heads. The deficiency is everywhere—in our homes, in our want of markets (two more have just been ordered in Paris as I write), in our slatterns of housewives. Only think of a public dinner in London! All the waiters wrangling and getting tipsy with the drainage of the bottles; tumbling over each other, swearing in whispers behind your back; obliging you with an aperçu of the dinner in a succession of spillings upon your coat; serving the caper-sauce—caper-paste is nearer the mark—with the haunch of mutton. Only think of these things, my dear Mr. Baker, and then ask yourself why, to dine with Amelie, I or or you must go to Paris; or to enjoy a table d'hôte we must travel to the banks of Lake Leman. We want chalk-heads among us, as the famous waiter observed. Instead of flaunting, impertinent barmaids, we want Amelie's sisters, who will buckle to their business in aprons and caps, and not make eyes at us while we are considering whether to-day we will eat kidneys à la brochette."

"We waste most, and we want most. I have travelled very much; I stick to that," said Mr. Baker.

"Yes. But think what would happen at Janodet's, if some afternoon you took off Felix, and the rest of his servants, and

obliged him with half a score of British waiters."

"He would go mad!" Mr. Bloomsbury Baker said, dolefully.

And I think he would go mad, I confess.

#### THE BRIMHAM CRAGS,

AWAY, away unto Heaven's own bound,  
Swept dale, and hill, and moorland.  
The winds rushed over the mighty rocks  
That crowned the grassy fore-land;  
The winds sang over the wild moor-fruit,  
Pale bud and glossy berry;  
And shook the blue-bell's fairy stem  
Till its chime woke, light and merry.  
The sunshine slept on the lavish bloom,  
Where warmth and scent together,  
Blent in a strange, sweet, subtle charm,  
Above the purple heather.

What wild convulsion of elder times,  
Had piled those grim, grey masses,  
Where Dacre Banks lie rich and fair,  
Amid the Craven passes?  
Gaily the Yorkshire autumn gilds  
The lovely valleys hiding,  
Mid beck, and broom, and waving ferns,  
All in the great West Riding.  
And never a nobler country brought  
Grandeur and rest together,  
Than that which planted Brimham Crag  
Amid the purple heather.

She loved their solemn glory well,  
She felt her heart-strings thrilling,  
As the hand of her own brave father-land,  
The beauty-bowl was filling.  
Yet, ay, as the sunshine flooded all,  
And the lark sang, sweet and shrilly,  
And the bee hummed over his bounteous fare,  
And the soft wind murmured stilly,  
She sighed, "Alas, that joy and hope,  
From love and life must sever,  
While the sun is gleaming on high-piled crags,  
And flushing the purple heather."

#### CHEVY CHASE.

THIS famous old ballad stands nearly in the same predicament as Robin Hood.\* No one knows when, or by whom, it was written; nor, among many versions, which was the earliest; nor, with strictness, the circumstances or events which it was meant to illustrate.

Was Chevy Chase a battle or a hunting party; or did two incidents become mixed up in the same ballad, so as to confuse our ideas of both?

In 1388 was fought the Battle of Otterbourne, on or near the border-land between England and Scotland. The Borderers were generally fighting in those days, sometimes for honour and glory, sometimes for cattle and pelf; and it was not always that the permission of the sovereigns of the two countries was asked for these en-

\* See ALL THE YEAR ROUND, New Series, vol. vii. p. 88.



counters. The Percy and Douglas families were the great leaders in that battle. Henry Percy, of the house of Northumberland, was then a chivalrous young man of twenty-two; and the Scottish Douglas had also his blood hot within him. Froissart, the French chronicler, obtained a narrative of the facts from three knights and two esquires who took part in the battle; and there is no reason to doubt that the substance of the current story was correct. We are told that James, Earl of Douglas, with his brother, the Earl of Murray, invaded Northumberland at the head of three thousand men; while at the same time the Earls of Fife and of Strathearn ravaged the Border further west, near the Cumberland coast. Douglas penetrated as far south as Newcastle-on-Tyne, where Henry Percy, Shakespeare's Harry Hotspur, commanded the garrison. Douglas captured Hotspur's pennon, shook it aloft, and boasted that he would carry it back to Dalkeith Castle. Hotspur, enraged at this, collected his men around him, and made a night attack on the Scottish camp at Otterbourne, about thirty miles from Newcastle. There was a desperate fight by moonlight. Douglas rushed to the front with an iron mace, accompanied by his chaplain and two squires; but all four were killed. There are still castle ruins at Otterbourne; near the spot is Fawdon Hill, now called Battle Cross, supposed to be the site of Douglas's camp. All admit that Douglas was killed; but the Scotch narrators of the story say that their side was victorious, losing only three hundred killed and prisoners, and killing and wounding nearly three thousand English; whereas other versions are silent about a defeat of the English. As to numbers, Percy seems evidently to have been stronger than Douglas, especially in bowmen. Of the four leaders, Douglas was killed on the spot, Murray was mortally wounded, while the two Percys (Harry and Ralph) were taken prisoners by the Scotch. Froissart affirms that "Of all the battayles and encounterings that I have made mencion of here before in all this hystery, great or smalle, this battayle that I treat of now is one of the sorest and best foughten, without cowardes or faynte hartes; for there was nyther knyghte nor squyer but that dyde his devoyee, and foughte hande to hande. This battayle was like the battayle of Becherell, the which was valiantly fought and endured." Douglas was buried at Melrose, beneath the high altar. "His

obsequye was done reverently, and on his bodye layde a tombe of stone, and his dagger hanging over hym."

Thus far, then, we tread on ground tolerably historical. Sir Walter Scott, when (in *Marmion*) he describes De Wilton as being knighted by Douglas, speaks of the new knight being dubbed by the veritable sword once worn by the Douglas of old. It was the sword

That once did turn  
The tide of fight at Otterburne,  
And Harry Hotspur forced to yield,  
When the dead Douglas won the field.

Otterbourne, Otterburne, Otterburn—spell it how we may—there was clearly a battle fought there nearly five centuries ago, between the Douglas and the Percy. On this history has been founded the ballad of the Battle of Otterbourne, of which at least four versions are known—one in the Harleian Manuscripts, one in the Cotton Manuscripts, one in the *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*, and one in *Hurd's Scottish Songs*. It is observable that national vanity has been at work here; the two Scottish versions are more favourable to Douglas than to Percy; whereas in the English versions the leaning is in the other direction. There is also reason to believe that in one of them an English minstrel doctored up a Scottish version, and gave a little southern twist to the end of the narrative. In the Cotton Manuscript, the Battle of Otterbourne is a ballad of seventy stanzas of four lines each. The language shows plainly that it must have been written many centuries back, though the date is not known, nor the name of the writer. It begins:

Yt felle abowght the Lamasse tyde,  
When husbands wynn ther haye,  
The dowghtye Dowglass bowynd hym to ryde  
In England to take a praye.

And then all the incidents of the encounter are given, including the deaths, the mortal woundings, and the captures. The concluding verse of the seventy looks very much as if it proceeded from an English pen:

Now let us all for the Percy praye  
To Jesu man of myght,  
To bryng hys sowle to the blyesse of heven,  
For he was a gentyll knyght.

And now we turn to Chevy Chase, a much more celebrated ballad than the Battle of Otterbourne. Chevy Chase means Cheviot Chase, a hunt upon the Cheviot hills; and that there was really one special hunt which gave rise to the ballad, seems

probable enough. In those lawless days, compacts were with difficulty enforced. It was one of the usages or agreements of the Marches, or Border districts between England and Scotland, that the Scots should not hunt on the English side of the dividing line, nor the English on the Scottish side, without the consent of the respective nobles or clan leaders. The Borderers were always prone to break this compact; and it was one of these instances of daring that gave rise to the ballad. A Douglas encountered a Percy, as at Otterbourne; but the battle was about thirty miles from Newcastle, whereas the hunt was in Teviotdale; Douglas was the offender in one case, and Percy in the other; moreover, there was a period of something like half a century between the two events; lastly, the second Douglas was the son of the first, and the same relationship existed between the two Percys. Nevertheless, we have every reason to believe that the old balladists, or minstrels, mixed up the two events together, putting some of the incidents of the battle into a ballad which professed to describe only the chase; or, perhaps, using some stanzas from the still older ballad of the Battle of Otterbourne.

When Addison wrote his celebrated criticism on Chevy Chase in the *Spectator*, he made use of the only version known to him, which he supposed to be the original. The story tells us that Percy, Earl of Northumberland, vowed to have three days' hunting over the Border, and kill Scottish deer, despite all opposition from the Douglas. Addison admires the opening stanzas:

God prosper long our noble king  
Our lives and safetyes all;  
A wofull hunting once there did  
In Chevy Chase befall.

The stout Earl of Northumberland,  
A vow to God did make,  
His pleasure in the Scottish woods  
Three summer's days to take.

With fifteen hundred bowmen bold,  
All chosen men of might,  
Who knew full well, in time of need,  
To aim their shafts aright.

Douglas, hearing of this, sent to forbid the hunt; but Percy disregarded the message, and set forth:

The hounds ran swiftly through the woods,  
The nimble deer to take;  
And with their cries the hills and dales  
An echo shrill did make.

They killed a hundred deer by noon, then dined, and then hunted again. News came that Douglas was approaching with twenty

hundred Scottish spearmen; and Percy rallied his hunters for a fight:

Earl Douglas on a milk-white steed,  
Most like a baron bold,  
Rode foremost of the company,  
Whose armour shone like gold.

And when he confronted his antagonist, he addressed him:

"Ere thus I will out-braved be,  
One of us two shall die:  
I know thee well, an earl thou art,  
Lord Percy, so am I."

Douglas had something of the nobility of chivalry in him:

"But trust me, Percy, pity it were,  
And great offence to kill  
Any of these our harmless men,  
For they have done no ill.

"Let thou and I the battle try,  
And set our men aside;"  
"Accurst be he," Lord Percy said,  
"By whom it is deny'd."

They fought, as two such men were wont to fight; but during a temporary parley, something like treachery took place among Percy's followers, for—

With that there came an arrow keen,  
Out of an English bow,  
Which struck Earl Douglas to the heart  
A deep and deadly blow.

Who never spoke more words than these,  
"Fight on my merry men all;  
For why, my life is at an end,  
Lord Percy sees my fall."

Percy, though willing to have fought to the death with his antagonist in a gallant way, grieved that he should have fallen in this fashion by another hand:

Then leaving life Earl Percy took  
The dead man by the hand,  
And said, "Earl Douglas, for thy sake  
Would I had lost my land.

"Oh, Christ! my very heart doth bleed  
With sorrow for thy sake;  
For sure a more renowned knight  
Mischance did never take."

The Scotch, seeing their leader fall, advanced with fury to the attack, and the English met them with full determination:

They clos'd full fast on ev'ry side,  
No slackness there they found;  
And many a gallant gentleman  
Lay gasping on the ground.

Sir Hugh Montgomery, a Scottish knight, resolved on revenging the loss of Douglas, galloped up to Percy, and ran him through the body. An English bowman, seeing this, singled out the assailant:

He had a bow bent in his hand,  
Made of a trusty tree;  
An arrow of a cloth-yard long  
Unto the head drew he.

Against Sir Hugh Montgomery  
So right his shaft he set,  
The grey goose wing that was thereon  
In his heart's blood was wet.

And so, one by one, they fell—Douglas, Montgomery, Sir Charles Carrel, Sir Charles Murrell, Sir David Lamb; and on the other side Egerton, Ratcliff, Russell, and a host of others. Barons, knights, esquires, all joined in the sanguinary encounter.

Then stept a gallant 'squire forth,  
Witherington was his name,  
Who said "I would not have it told  
To Henry our king for shame,  
"That e'er my captain fought on foot,  
And I stood looking on."

And then comes a stanza which has been much discussed.

For Witherington needs must I wayle,  
As one in doleful dumps;  
For when his legs were smitten off,  
He fought upon his stumps.

These "doleful dumps" were considered to be beneath the dignity of the subject; and Addison avoided quoting the stanza because Butler had made fun of it. We shall see presently, however, that the original stanzas had no such words as "doleful dumps." Down they sank, leaders and retainers alike:

This fight did last from break of day  
Till setting of the sun;  
For when they rang the ev'ning bell  
The battle scarce was done.

Of the fifteen hundred whom Percy brought to the fray, all fell but fifty-three. Of the two thousand followers of Douglas, only fifty-five left the field alive. And then the sorrow of the women:

Next day did many widows come  
Their husbands to bewail;  
They wash'd their wounds in brinish tears,  
But all would not prevail.  
Their bodies bath'd in purple blood,  
They bore with them away;  
They kiss'd them dead a thousand times  
When they were clad in clay.

The King of Scotland mourned the day:

This news was brought to Edinburgh,  
Where Scotland's king did reign,  
That brave Earl Douglas suddenly  
Was with an arrow slain.

"Oh, heavy news!" King James did say,  
"Scotland can witness be,  
I have not any captain more  
Of such account as he!"

The English monarch breathed vengeance:

Like tidings to King Henry came  
Within as short a space,  
That Percy of Northumberland  
Was slain in Chevy Chase.

"Now God be with him!" said our king,  
"Sith 'twill no better be,  
I trust I have within my realm  
Five hundred good as he."

"Yet shall not Scot nor Scotland say,  
But I will vengeance take,  
And be revenged on them all  
For brave Lord Percy's sake."

And so the balladist winds up with:

God save the king, and bless the land,  
In plenty, joy, and peace;  
And grant henceforth that foul debate  
'Twixt noblemen may cease.

Addison did not know (and no one seems to have known in his time) that the real ballad of Chevy Chase was much older, much more quaint and rugged in structure, than the version which he so admiringly criticised. He adduced Ben Jonson's declaration, that he would rather have been the author of Chevy Chase than of all his works; and Sir Philip Sidney's words, "I never heard the old song of Percie and Douglas, that I found not my heart more moved than with a trumpet; and yet if sung by some blind crowder with no rougher voice than rude style, which being so evil apparelled in the dust and cobweb of that uncivil age, what would it work trimmed in the gorgeous eloquence of Pindar?" Addison believed that Ben Jonson and Sir Philip Sidney were speaking of the ballad which he had under notice; but it is now considered almost certain that they treated of an earlier version. Bishop Percy, rather more than a century ago, brought to light a copy of the ballad at least as old as the reign of Henry the Seventh, with the name of Richard Sheele as the author, or rather transcriber. The bishop expressed a belief that the version which Addison eulogised could not have been earlier than the time of Queen Elizabeth; and that it was written after (perhaps consequent upon) Sir Philip Sidney's praise of the original.

Look at the difference between the two versions. The later has more suavity of diction, but the earlier has more fire and rough vigour. The old version starts off thus:

The Persè out of Northombarlande,  
And a vowe to God mayde he,  
That he wolde hunte in the mountayns,  
Off Chyviatt within dayes thre,  
In the maner of doughte Doglès,  
And all that ever with him be.

Percy's acceptance of the challenge of Douglas runs thus:

Thus Syr Hary toke the fylde,  
For soth, as I you saye;  
Jesu Cryste in hevyn on byght  
Dyd helpe hym well that daye.

The killing of Percy by Montgomery is stern indeed:

Through Erle Percy's body then  
He thrust his hateful spere;  
With such vehement force and might  
His bodye he did gore,  
The staff ran through the other side  
A large cloth yard and more.

The achievement of the gallant Witherington reads better, though more rugged, than in the new version:

For Wetharyngton my harte was wo,  
That ever he slayne shulde be;  
For when both hys leggis were hewyne in to,  
Yet he knyled and fought on hys kne.

Percy's lament over the death of Douglas is fine:

The Persè leanyde on his brande,  
And sawe the Duglès de;  
He tooke the dede man be the hande,  
And sayd "Wo ys for the,  
To have sayed thy lyffe I wudd have partyd with  
My landes for years thre;  
For a better man of hart, more of hande,  
Was not in the north cowntre,"

The news to the two kings is tersely put:

Wordeys commyn to Eaden-burrowe,  
To Jamy the Skottishe kyng,  
That dougheti Duglès, lyff-tenaunte of the Merchis,  
He lay slayn Chevyat within.  
Wordeys commyn to lory London,  
Till the fourth Harry our kyng.  
That Lord Persè, lyff-tenaunte of the Merchis,  
He lay slayn Chevyat within.

The scene of the mourning widows is touchingly told:

Their bodyes bath'd in purple blode,  
They bore with them away;  
They kist them dead a thousand times,  
Ere they were cladd in clay.

Researches since the days of Bishop Percy have brought to light other versions of Chevy Chase, and evidence that some of the ballads mix up incidents of the hunt with incidents of the Battle of Otterbourne, despite the interval of half a century between them. The earliest known ballad has the title, *The Hunting o' the Cheviot*, which name by degrees became altered to *Chevy Chase*; it has forty-five stanzas, mostly of four lines each, but some of six, and is divided into two fyttes or sections. A second version is in the Cotton Library, and a third in the Harleian Collection, differing in length from each other, and from the older ballad, and mixing up in a more confused manner the battle with the hunt. The ballad known to Addison was probably a modernisation of all three, with such changes of incident as the balladists chose to make. A Latin translation of the modern, or best known *Chevy Chase*, was written by Wold of Oxford about two centuries ago; but the *Cheviot*, is a poor substitute for our good old *Chevy*.

Sir Walter Scott was of opinion that the

changes made in *Chevy Chase* were many and frequent; and that Bishop Percy did not hit the truth when he supposed the modern ballad to be a new copy of the original, expressly modernised by some later bard. The current version, he thinks, was "produced by the gradual alterations of numerous reciters, during two centuries, in the course of which the ballad has been gradually moulded into a composition having only a general resemblance to the original, expressing the same events and sentiments in much smoother language, and more flowing and easy versification, but losing in poetical fire and energy, and in the vigour and pithiness of expression, a great deal more than it has gained in suavity of diction."

Mr. W. Chappell, notwithstanding much search, has failed to discover any tune associated with this lengthy ballad; but he nevertheless believes that it was at one period sung as well as recited. He points to a passage in a play of the seventeenth century, in which a husband includes among the good qualities of his wife, "the curious voice which she used to sing *Chevy Chase*." The days of long ballads are so completely past, that we can hardly imagine a singer wending his way through sixty or seventy verses.

A theory has recently been started that there was no chase or hunt concerned in the matter at all, the only real incident being the Battle of Otterbourne. The process of reasoning adopted is a curious one among the oddities of etymology. There was an old word, *chevachie* or *chevachee*, applied to a cavalry skirmish, troopers' raid, or expedition of horse. Chaucer mentions it, in relation to the Young Squire:

He hadde be sometime in chevachie,  
In Flandries, in Artois, and in Picardie,  
And borne him wel.

The French *chevaucher* and *chevauchée*, riding on horseback, may have given origin to *chevachie* and *chevachee*, as a name for a raid or foray. There is among English boys a game of *chevy* or *chivy*, a kind of imitative raid against an enemy. The propounder of the new theory suggests that, in the course of time, the first half of the word *chevachie* gradually changed from *cheva* to *chevy*, *chevet*, *cheviat*, *cheviot*, without the real *Cheviot* hills having anything to do with the matter; while the second half gradually changed from *chies* to *chees*, *chays*, *chase*, without any real hunt or chase being involved. And thus *chevachie*s, or troopers' forays, became



Chevy Chase. It may be so; but we are not well content to lose our old Chevy Chase in this way.

### PRIMITIVE BUILDERS.

It is not often or sufficiently considered how closely allied, in their first principles, are the arts as practised by even the most barbarous races inhabiting this earth, with those which are the pride of the most civilised nations. It may be explained that this is due to the obvious truth that all arts, to whatsoever perfection they may have been developed, must have had their origin in the rude ideas of uncultivated times, and this is probably true; but the explanation, though a good one so far as it goes, does not go far enough. We have to seek the complete elucidation of so remarkable a fact in human instinct adapting itself not merely to human wants, but also to the available materials at hand. Thus, in stony countries, timber structures are rare, while in forest regions, naturally, wood is employed in building. In hot latitudes, roofs are flat; in rainy climates, they are sloping; in cold, as thick as they can be made. We perceive these characteristics in nearly every part of the world. Again with respect to floors. The savage who lives in a swamp, or within reach of a river or an overflow, elevates his dwelling on posts; he who inhabits a dry place is content with beating the earth hard; while he whose home is exposed to the attacks of wild beasts, perches his cabin amid the branches of a tree. These rules, of course, are not universal; yet they are sufficiently general for the purpose. And it is curious to observe that, in the construction of their abodes, the simplest people upon this globe are governed by a common-sense reference to circumstances; the fisherman planting his house as near as possible to his boat; the tiller of the soil in spots most favoured by the sun; the hunter on the edge of the wood or prairie. Instinct taught the warlike New Zealander to erect his village in the most inaccessible position, as it did the Red Indian in the most remote. The same innate sagacity told the Bedonins of Arabia and the Tartars of the Great Desert that it was in vain for them to dream of founding a permanent settlement; they must follow the seasons with their flocks and herds, and stay in one neighbourhood only while its pastures are unexhausted. The necessity of frequent journeys dictated, moreover,

the choice of materials. They could not be heavy, solid, or unelastic, but light, pliable, and in a portable form; hence the tent and wigwam, the use of skins and woven tissues, of slender bamboo, palm, and withy frames. In some of the less-known islands of the East, a man spends all the summer in his canoe, on the sea, or the waters of streams, and in the winter, hauling his craft up a little creek, covers it in and converts it into a floating cottage, wherein, for a few months, he and his family enjoy a sleepy leisure. Where earthquakes are frequent, the savage is careful not to construct his habitation in too ponderous a style; firstly, in order that its sudden overthrow may not crush him; secondly, that it may be worth little, and be easily replaced. Thus, we perceive a subtle meaning in these apparently spontaneous and accidental varieties of edifice in which these tribes of mankind, self-taught in the strictest sense of the term, or rather taught by nature, shelter themselves. Numerous definitions have been given of man; one of them might be that he is essentially a house-building creature, though not alone in that respect, as the animal kingdom testifies by a thousand illustrations, from that of the beaver to that of the bee. Scarcely any tribe has ever been found, in the worst of wildernesses, entirely homeless. Even that most miserable of beings, the aboriginal of Australia, sleeps beneath a canopy of woven branches; and the very Doko of Northern Africa, though he has not wit enough to fasten two boughs together, scoops for himself a cavern in the side of the hill. The open sky, by the common consent of humanity, was never intended to suffice as a roof, nor would it, except for a time, no matter how healthy the climate, or how genial. Consequently, the inventive faculties of our species have, from ages immemorial, been engaged in devising methods for the creation of more or less comfortable homes. Of course, among savages, there are not fewer distinctions as to aptitude and resources than among civilised communities. This one simply understands how to raise a wall of clay, rammed hard, and roofed over with rough wood; while the other comprehends the value of regular door and window-frames. Mr. Muster, whose recently published work on Patagonia describes a vast interior territory never before trodden by the European foot, gives some most interesting, and even surprising, particulars upon this subject. He was astonished to find, not only extensive structures, capable

of accommodating several hundreds of persons, but excellent carpentry, the work of rude tools, planned and finished as if by the European hand. The doors were not hinged, it is true, nor were the windows glazed; but both might have been adapted to those purposes without the slightest difficulty: more than this, so accurate was the fitting of parts that nails were unnecessary, and the whole edifice, in the course of an hour or two, might be made portable. A similar, though less remarkable, account has just come to us, also, from the hitherto unexplored islands of the North Pacific, where, in the course of a hundred years since their discovery, only one Englishman has ever taken up his abode.

A curious circumstance is that savage races, though they frequently bake clay for the manufacture of household utensils, have never put it through this process in order to make bricks. If they want an earthen wall, they raise it in a mass upon a wooden or wattled frame, and rely upon compression, as well as the heat of the sun, to insure durability. But this depends very much upon the characteristics of the region they inhabit. The fixed tribes inhabiting the oases, or scattered expanses of wood and verdure in the Great Sahara, have little else to do than to bend a circle of palm branches to a head, tie the tops together, plaster over the skeleton with a mixture of sand and mud, and the house is complete, since chimneys are not necessary, and the earthen floor is always dry. Far otherwise with the people of countries in which periodical rains occur, as in the hill districts of India, where, and, indeed, on the plains also, long as we have been established in that region, as its masters and civilisers, there are thousands upon thousands of villages which no Englishman has ever seen. They do not allow the season of deluges to take them by surprise. On the contrary, selecting the gentlest slopes, and those least exposed to the concentrated rush of a torrent, they drive their foundations of piles deep into the earth, so that no sudden gathering of the waters, unless it be of extraordinary violence, shall shake them. These piles, or posts, rise high enough to support the roof. But, twin with each, so to speak, is another solid post, only two or three feet high, and from one of these to another are laid rough plankings, covered over with a species of basket-work, to form the flooring. Before this is placed, however, the ground below is carefully smoothed, hardened, and furrowed

with little channels, so that when the inundation comes, instead of being obstructed, it is actually aided on its way, and all danger to the structure above is prevented. This is a remarkable example of ingenuity taught by experience. On the other hand, there are countries which, rarely visited by an excess of water, are exposed to tremendous periodical winds. Without any but the rude science which has been acquired by observation, or which has been transmitted to him from his forefathers, the savage builder looks for a sheltered spot, and, if he be the denizen of a wood, is careful to avoid that side on which the great trees, torn up by tropical gusts, may be expected to fall, for, except in the region of whirlwinds, they invariably, season after season, fall in one direction, a circumstance noticed by numerous travellers. This is especially true of what are called the forest gales of South America, where the native dwellings, though picturesque, are exceedingly primitive. The inhabitants of those immense solitudes, living far apart, entirely dependent for their subsistence upon the woodland and the river, and rarely brought into contact with strangers, exhibit a deep appreciation of comfort in the construction and arrangement of their houses, the fashions of which have not changed, we may presume, for uncounted centuries. But, of all savage tribes—to use the word savage in its conventional sense, as meaning primeval, and uninfluenced by association with Europeans—the South Sea Islanders have excelled as domestic builders. We do not speak of them as they have been since the missionaries became their teachers, and altered their costumes; we refer to the time when they led their own free island life, and when their only occupations were the gathering—not the cultivation, for it was not needed—of food, the fabrication of ornaments—not clothing—for their bodies, and the construction of their simple dwellings. Anything more elegant, light, and artistic, better adapted to its purpose and the climate, or more in union with the nature surrounding it, than the Otaheitian cottage, as it stood among the palms, before civilisation had sailed that way, it would be impossible to conceive. Latticed, hung with mat-blinds, floored and roofed for coolness, always exquisitely situated, perfect in outline, fragile as a hut of rushes, yet in its interior fresh as marble, it was precisely what the luxurious islander, among those happy forests, wanted—and this is a consideration not always attended to

even in countries which have been steeped to the lips in civilisation for the last thousand years or more. It is a misfortune, perhaps, that in studying arts we are so apt to forget our instincts, and in this respect there are savages enough left, perhaps, still more or less unsophisticated, to revivify your memories. For that is the essential of nearly all savage architecture, if architecture it may be called—the adaptation of their work to their necessities. Of this we have already suggested illustrations. But the Europeans introduced formality—chapel-shapes and other abominations, cast-iron school-houses, model cottages, huddled together in ill-placed hamlets for the sake of holding congregations, and gaining a leverage for authority, and the prettiest pictures of Pacific life are rapidly fading from view. Directly in contrast with the manners of these gentle people, who loved each to build his roof where the position pleased him, are those of the far more barbarous islanders of the Malayan archipelago. They, like the Patagonians, to whom we have alluded, rejoice in enormous buildings, capable of containing great numbers. A house, in certain parts of Borneo, means a village. It is one long structure, raised on posts, approached by ladders, and divided by partitions, with one common open platform running the entire length in front. There is frequently much solidity and good workmanship in these edifices, notwithstanding the inferiority of the materials. But here, again, we notice an object to be attained, and therefore kept sedulously, though in all likelihood unconsciously, in sight. The region is one of incessant warfare between the several tribes. Every “village-house” is, therefore, in some sort, a fortress, and the fighting men are thus rarely far dispersed—precautions never required in those islands of peace in the Southern Pacific, until strangers visited and vexed their shores. The same principle, though under a different form, appears in the Andamans, in the interior of Formosa, in the minor groups off the Australian coasts, and among the Kaffir tribes of Southern Africa. But turn to other latitudes, utterly in contrast with these, and what shall we see? The Lap, or the Samoyede, erects no fortifications. He constructs his abode solely for the sake of warmth; his weapons are made for warfare against the fish of the sea, and the amphibious creatures that in summer-time supply his wants for the year. Hence those heavy, rude, mole-hill buildings,

whence the grand necessity is to exclude all the air, and retain all the heat that is possible.

One fact of interest should be noticed in connexion with this subject. The savage, though he may possess iron, seldom, if ever, employs it in the construction of his dwelling-house. He deems iron too valuable for such an application. It is supremely useful to him in the manufacture of arms, axes, knives, harpoons, fish-hooks, and other articles, which enter into the very essence of barbarian existence. Consequently, he thinks it wasteful to lock up a material so precious, by burying it in posts, planks, and beams. In the most elaborate of his structures, therefore, such as those of Patagonia, he employs pegs of wood, which, again, are more easily removed. But a rude method of dove-tailing is exceedingly common, and still more so are lashings of flexible bamboo, or strong grass, or interweavings of rushes, to hold the slight framework together. Often, he depends upon the mere weight of his materials to keep them in their places; and, when this is insufficient, he steadies his roof by heaping it with stones. Again, as we have seen, he binds the parts together with strongly adhesive clay, occasionally mixed with sand, since, though the savage has no notion of a brick, he now and then exhibits his idea of mortar. By every one of these signs the traveller can tell, upon entering into a territory new to him, what manner of people inhabit it, even without seeing the people at all. Supposing the country to have been swept clean of its population, leaving its human habitations intact, an intelligent and practised eye, without the slightest previous information, could determine whether the climate was hot, cold, or temperate, dry or damp, apt to engender reptiles or insects, liable to storms, or balmy in all seasons, overrun by periodical floods, or for ever tropically arid; whether the inhabitants had been peaceful or warlike, simple-minded or suspicious, innocent or bloodthirsty—for there are many indications on this point scarcely less emphatic than the scalps in the red man’s wigwam; whether they were fishermen, hunters, or husbandmen; whether they had been poor or prosperous, since the difference between misery and comfort is never more distinctly marked than upon the house in which a family lives; and whether they were completely primitive, or had been tampered with by the little finger of civilisation—which is about the only finger usually

stretched out to them. And is this peculiar to the savage? So far from it that it is true of every community in the world. We may judge of the population anywhere, in London as in Abyssinia, by the nature and condition of its abodes. There is not less to be judged from a hovel in Bethnal Green than from a mud-hut in the valley of the Upper Nile. So that there is some affinity, after all, between the laws of life in every land. Another point deserving notice is that, though we have, for the sake of generalisation, and of convenience, employed the term architecture in relation to this topic, we have been compelled to restrict our observations, for the most part, to wooden and clay structures; for the savage rarely piles one stone upon another. Indeed, your true savage is never found inhabiting a rocky region. He is a creature of the woods and prairies. There are barbarians, of the most brutal character, it is true, who swarm where the earth is stony and barren; but they do not avail themselves of the material lying at their feet; they are the dwellers in tents, who change the place of their location with every fluctuation of the season. A stone village, tenanted by pure savages, is a thing unheard of. In fact, a tribe of Bechuannas, or Charlotte Islanders, or even New Zealanders, set down in Arabia Petrea, and bidden to build themselves homes there, would, even if food were forthcoming, infallibly perish, to the last man, within the course of a single year. No; they must have trees, and water, and a soft soil, and game, and fish, and vegetable substances, to supply the apparatus of their home, or they wither away like grass during a drought. All the marbles of Greece, ready quarried, would be worthless to the builder of basket-work cottages in the valley of the Upper Amazon. The New Zealander fights among rocks, but he never uses them except as a cover against the enemy's fire; his house and his fortifications are invariably constructed of timber. Even where stone has been used by the savage, it has never been in the construction of his home; but always in the rearing of his altar or his temple. Had he the disposition to build in this material, he has not the tools; he could not afford the time; he has, generally, to earn, each day, sustenance for himself and his family; or, still worse, to do that and lay by for the barren season. Moreover, house-building, in the primitive regions we speak of, is as much an affair of women's and children's industry, as of men's, or even

more. The foundations once driven into the earth—where there are such foundations, as often there are not—the running up of the superstructures, especially in a warm and dry climate, is a comparatively light task, involving only the putting together of slender frames, the weaving of mats, the sewing together of leaves—equivalent to tiles or slates, over many a broad space of this earth—the finding of palm poles, and the fabrication of wattled screens. It has struck some travellers as singular that these fragile habitations, thus composed, are not continually destroyed by fire; but a conflagration in a true savage village is the rarest event in the world, because, whatsoever fires are necessary, are kindled in the open air, away from the house—a practice which it is impossible to recommend for imitation among ourselves, much as we may admire the simple safety of the plan. Upon the whole, however, there can be little doubt but that these first-born children of the earth, if so we may believe them to be, did intuitively discover, or, to use a familiar expression, hit upon, exactly the architecture which was suited to their several needs, whether they roamed the Arctic snows or the Tartar pasturages, drove the elk through the American forest, or idled upon yam and banana feasts in the rich isles of the Pacific. And a race which can do this, no matter whether through mere instinct, or otherwise, may not be so utterly savage after all.

## THE YELLOW FLAG.

By EDMUND YATES,

AUTHOR OF "BLACK SHEEP," "NOBODY'S FORTUNE," &c. &c.

### BOOK III.

#### CHAPTER V. AN EXPLOSION.

IN what he called his dreary solitude in South Audley-street (the landlord was of a different opinion, and was accustomed to mention it as elegant quarters for a nobleman or private gentleman, and to charge three hundred a year for the accommodation), Mr. Henrich Wetter was walking to and fro, just as Martin Gurwood, tired out by his night's journey, was beginning to open his eyes and to realise the fact that he was in the Great Northern Hotel. Now sipping his coffee, now nibbling at his dry toast, while all the time achieving his toilet, Mr. Wetter communed with himself. His thoughts were of a pleasant character, no doubt, for there was a smile upon his face, and he occasionally suspended his operations, both of breakfasting



and dressing, in order to rub his hands softly together in the enjoyment of some exquisite sly joke.

"I think so," he said, as, pausing in his walk, he leaned his elbows on the velvet mantelpiece of the sitting-room, and regarded himself approvingly in the looking-glass; "I think the time has come for me to bring this little affair to a crisis; dalliance is very delightful for boys; the bashful glances, the sidelong looks, the tremulous hand-clasps, and all that sort of thing, are very charming in one's youthful days, but as one advances in life one finds that procrastination in such affairs is a grand mistake; either it is to be or it is not to be, and it is advisable to know one's fate, to 'put it to the touch, and win or lose it all,' as the poet says, as speedily as possible. I rather think it is to be in this instance. The young lady, who chooses to pass herself off as Mrs. Claxton, is remarkably quiet and demure; I should almost be inclined to characterise her as one of those English bread-and-butter misses, if I had not been acquainted with her antecedents. 'Yes' and 'No,' 'Thank you,' and 'Oh, indeed!' That is about the average style of her conversation; no apparent appreciation of anything spiritual; no smart reply; nothing piquant or provocative about her; compared to a French-woman, or a New York belle, she is positively insipid, and yet she has fascinated me in a way that is quite inexplicable to myself. It is not her beauty, for though she is undoubtedly pretty in her simple English style, I have known hundreds of more beautiful women. I think the charm must lie in that very want of manner of which I have just been complaining; in her modesty and quiet grace, and in her utter unconsciousness of her own powers of attraction; but, whatever it may be, it has had an enormous effect upon me, and I believe myself to be more in love with her than I have been for many years with any woman.

"She likes me too, I think, if one can judge by the manner of any one so thoroughly undemonstrative. She always makes me welcome when I call at the house, and accepts, passively indeed, but still accepts, such small courtesies as I have thought it right to offer her. A woman like that, accustomed to affection and attention—for I have no doubt old Calverley was very fond of her in his way—must necessarily want something to cling to, and Alice has nothing; for though she is very fond of little Bell, the child is not her

own flesh and blood, and here I have the whole field clear to myself, without any fear of rivalry; for I do not count Humphrey Statham as a rival," continued Mr. Wetter, as a contemptuous smile passed across his face, "though he is evidently deeply smitten. I can judge that by the manner in which he scowled at me the other evening when he found me comfortably seated there, and by the awkward, uncouth manners, mainly consisting of silent glaring, which an Englishman always adopts whenever he wants to ingratiate himself with a woman. No, no, Mr. Humphrey Statham, yours is not the plan to win little Alice's heart! Besides, if I find you making too much play I could command the services of my dear cousin; I could insist that Madame Du Tertre, my old friend Mademoiselle Pauline Lunelle, should interest herself on my side, and she has evidently immense influence over the little woman.

"I think," said Mr. Wetter, softly stroking his long fair beard as he surveyed himself in the glass, "I think I will go up to Pollington-terrace about mid-day to-day; I am looking very well, and feeling bright and in excellent spirits; and as my plan is well conceived and well matured, there is no reason why I should any longer delay putting it into execution. It would be advisable, however," said he, reflecting, "that my dear cousin should not be in the house at the moment of my visit; I will send down a note to her begging her to come and see me in the City—a hint which I think she will not dare to disobey, and while she is making her way eastward, I will go over to Pollington-terrace."

Mr. Wetter came to this determination, and to the conclusion of his dressing and his breakfast simultaneously. He then called a cab and proceeded to the City, having, on his way thither, the satisfaction of passing another cab proceeding in the same direction, in the occupant of which he recognised Humphrey Statham. The two gentlemen exchanged salutations—Mr. Wetter's being bland and courteous, Mr. Statham's short and reserved; but Mr. Wetter was very much tickled at the thought of their having met on that particular day, and the smile of satisfaction never left his face until he arrived at his office. Once there, he threw himself into his business with his accustomed energy; for no thought of pleasure past, or gratification in store, ever caused him to be the least inattentive to the main chance. Foreign capitalists and English merchants,

flashy promoters of fraudulent companies, and steady-going, sober bank directors, men from the West-end, who, filled with stories of the fabulous fortunes made by City speculations, believed in Heinrich Wetter's widespread renown, came to him for advice and assistance; members of parliament and peers of the realm—all of these had interviews with Mr. Wetter during the two hours which he chose to devote to business that day, and all found him clear-headed, and apparently without thought for any other matter than that which each submitted to him. But when the clock on his mantelpiece pointed to the hour of one, there was scarcely any occasion for him to look to it, for the great rush of pattering feet down the court, which his window overlooked, and in which a celebrated chop-house was situate, informed him that the clerks' dinner hour had arrived; and Mr. Wetter rang his bell, summoned his private secretary, and intimated his intention of striking work for the day. The confidential young gentleman, too well trained to say anything at this unwonted proceeding on his employer's part, found it impossible to avoid expressing his surprise by an elevation of his eyebrows—a movement which Mr. Wetter did not fail to observe, though he made no comment on it, but he closed his desk, and washed his hands leisurely, chatting to his companion meanwhile, and then effected his retreat by the private staircase; for it was not advisable that the clerks should witness their chief's departure. He stepped into the street, and, hailing a cab, was driven away to Polington-terrace.

Mr. Wetter's self-communings while riding in the cab were much of the same kind as those which had occupied him during his morning's toilet. He had directed his driver to take a back route, so as to avoid the main thoroughfare, lest he should be seen by Pauline on her journey down to the City; and there was comparatively so little traffic along the gaunt streets and in the grim old squares through which he passed, that his attention was not distracted, and the current of his thoughts was little disturbed. He would make his formal declaration that day! he had determined upon that; he should tell Alice that he loved her, that he had in vain struggled against the passion which she had inspired in his breast the first time he accidentally saw her, now some time ago, in the garden at Rose Cottage! She would listen, blush, and probably be moved to tears; she would

talk about marriage of course, that was always the way with women in her position, and he should fence lightly with the subject, giving her no positive assurance either way. Not that the idea of marrying Alice had ever entered into his mind, but that he thought it would be better to avoid the discussion, certainly to avoid the trouble of having to prove to her how impossible it would be for him to take such a step, until he had established himself more firmly in her favour. There would be little difficulty in the matter he thought, though more than if she were a woman of expensive tastes and luxurious habits. That her manner of life, simple and modest as it was, seemed to satisfy her, Mr. Wetter regarded as the most adverse element to the success of his campaign; but she would naturally desire to be once more the mistress of a pretty house, such as she had inhabited when he first saw her, and to be freed from the companionship and supervision of Madame Du Tertre. To suggest that by accepting his offer she could be released from the enforced company of that lady was, Mr. Wetter thought, a great stroke of generalship.

He alighted from the cab at the corner of the terrace, according to his custom, for his tact told him that the frequent arrival of gentlemen visitors in hansom cabs was likely to scandalise Mrs. Claxton in her neighbours' eyes, and walked quietly up the street. To Mr. Wetter such expeditions were by no means rare, and if any one had told him he would have been nervous, he would have laughed in his informant's face; but, to do him justice, he felt a certain inward trepidation, and, though a cool wintry breeze was blowing, he raised his hat and wiped the perspiration from his brow as he stood upon the door-step after ringing at the bell. He asked for Madame Du Tertre at first, and his surprise and slight annoyance at learning that she was from home were admirably feigned. Then he asked for Mrs. Claxton. The servant recognised him as one of the few regular visitors to the house, as the only one, moreover, who had been in the habit of placing largess in her sooty palm, and as a nice, well-dressed, good-looking gentleman at all times. "Mrs. Claxton was at home," she said. "Would he walk in?"

Mr. Wetter's nervous trepidation increased as he heard the street-door close behind him, and he was glad when he found himself alone in the room to which he was ushered, the servant retiring and promising to let her mistress know of his advent. Examining himself in the glass he saw that

he was paler than usual, and that his nether lip trembled.

"It's a deuced odd thing," he muttered, "I never felt like this before. I wish there was a glass of brandy handy. What can there be in this woman to upset a man like myself, so perfectly accustomed to such matters?"

The next moment Alice entered the room. Mr. Wetter had admired her from the first time he set eyes upon her, but thought he had never seen her looking so lovely as now, with her healthy red and white complexion set off by her black dress; her shining head with its crisp ripples of dark brown hair and her hazel eyes, in which a deep, settled, somewhat mournful look had succeeded to the ever-flashing bright glances of yore. There was something of an air of constraint about her as she bowed to Mr. Wetter, and timidly held out her hand.

"You are surprised to see me, Mrs. Claxton, are you not?" said Wetter, doing his best to conquer the nervousness which still beset him. "To see me at such a time of the day, I mean. I have hitherto availed myself of the privilege of calling upon you in the evening, which, on account of my being a busy man, you were good enough to extend to me; but, having occasion to be in this neighbourhood, I took advantage of the opportunity to inquire after your health."

Alice murmured something to the effect that she was much obliged to him, but Mr. Wetter's quick eye detected that she too was nervous and uncomfortable. And Mr. Wetter thought this was not a bad chance.

"I am sorry," said Alice, after a slight pause, "that Madame Du Tertre is not within."

"I am also sorry to miss my cousin," said Mr. Wetter, "she is always so spirituelle, so amiable. But, to tell the truth, my visit of to-day was not to her, and even had she been at home I should have asked to see you."

"To see me, Mr. Wetter! And why?"

"Because, Mrs. Claxton, I have something to say to you, and to you alone. A woman even of your small experience," he continued with the faintest sneer playing round his mouth, "cannot fail to have observed that you have made upon me more than an ordinary impression; that even during our brief acquaintance you have inspired me with feelings such as we are not often permitted in our lives to experience."

Alice was silent. As she listened to his first words, as the tone in which he spoke fell upon her ear, the scene then passing seemed to fade away, and there arose before her mind a vision of the river-walk along the banks of the Ouse just abreast of Bishopthorpe, where in the calm summer evening Arthur Preston had insulted her with his base proposal. Mr. Wetter augured well from this silence, and proceeded more volubly.

"I have known you longer than you imagine," he said, "and have admired you from the first instant I set eyes upon you. I was so captivated that I determined at all hazards to make your acquaintance, and when I had done so, I discovered that you were more charming than ever, that I was more hopelessly enslaved. And then came the fierce desire to win you, to take you all to myself, to hold you as my own, my only love."

She was silent still, her eyes fixed on vacancy, though her lips trembled. Henrich Wetter bent forward and laid his hand upon her fingers as they twitched nervously in her lap. "Alice," he whispered, "do you hear me?"

The touch roused her at once. "Yes," she said, quickly withdrawing her hand from his as though she had been stung, and rising from her chair, "I do hear what pains and grieves me in the highest degree."

"Pains and grieves you, Alice——"

"My name is Mrs. Claxton, and I desire you will call me by it. Yes, pains and grieves me, Mr. Wetter," she continued, in a breaking voice, and with a sudden abnegation of her dignity; "it is cruel of you; it is not like a gentleman to speak to me in this way without the slightest encouragement, and within six months of my husband's death."

Not like a gentleman! That phrase, quietly spoken as it was, and without any attempt at dramatic emphasis, cut Henrich Wetter to the soul. He was not a gentleman by birth or breeding, by nature, or even by education—and he knew it. His life was one long struggle to deceive on this point those with whom he was brought into contact. He was always suspecting that his position as gentleman was being called in question, and often he would sit with lowering brow and flaming cheek construing the most innocent observations into personal reflections on himself. Not a gentleman! For an instant he winced under the phrase, and then with his blood boiling he determined to be revenged.

He had his voice perfectly under his command as he leant lazily back in his chair, and looked up at her.

"Your husband's death!" he echoed. "Don't you think, Mrs.—Mrs. Claxton, you had better drop all that nonsense with me?"

Alice scarcely understood his words, but there was no mistaking the marked insolence of his tone. "I—I don't understand you," she said, in amazement.

"Oh, yes you do!" said Mr. Wetter, with the same lazy air. "I am not Mr. Statham, you know, nor one of your neighbours in the terrace here. I am a man of the world, and understand these matters. Don't talk about dead husbands to me!"

For an instant Alice stood petrified. For an instant a vague idea flashed across her that John might not be dead after all. She had never seen him after death. Could there by any possibility have been a mistake in his identity?

"I don't understand you, Mr. Wetter," she said, in a low, hurried voice. "Do you mean to say that my husband, Mr. Claxton, is not dead?"

"I mean to say," said Wetter, "what you know very well, that the man with whom you lived in the cottage at Hendon—I saw you there—was not your husband at all!"

Alice bent forward, leaning her hands upon the table, and looking at him for an instant with parted lips and heaving breast. Then she said, "Not my husband! John Claxton not my husband!"

"John Claxton, indeed!" cried Wetter. "Now, how perfectly ridiculous it is in you to attempt to keep up this nonsense with me. Call the man by his right name—acknowledge him in his proper position!"

She bent nearer to him, with her eyes fixed upon his, and said in a low voice, "Are you mad, or am I?"

In an instant Wetter's intelligence showed him the real state of the case. This woman was not what he had supposed. She believed herself what she professed to be, the widow of a man named Claxton, not the mistress of dead John Calverley. What should he do? His rage was over, his reason had returned, and he was prepared to act in the way which would best serve his purpose. Should he withdraw from the position he had advanced, getting out of it as best he might, or should he

point out to her how matters really stood, the fraud of which she had been the victim, involving her degradation and her shame. That would be the better plan, he thought, for the end he had in view. To destroy her worship of John Calverley's memory, to point out to her how low she had fallen, and then to offer himself as her consoler. That was the best game in his power, and he determined to play it.

His manner had lost all its insolence, all its familiarity, as he courteously motioned her to a seat, and said, "Sit down, madam, and hear me. Either you are wishing to deceive me, or, as I rather believe, you have yourself been made the victim of a gross deception. If the latter be the case, you will require all your nerve to bear what I am going to tell you. The man whom you knew under the name of Claxton, and whom you believed to be your husband, was in reality John Calverley, a married man, married long since to a woman of double your age."

She did not start, she did not cry. She looked hard at him, and said in a voice that seemed to force itself with difficulty through her compressed lips, "It is not true! It is a lie!"

"It is true—I swear it!" cried Henrich Wetter. "I knew Mr. Calverley in business years ago. Some months before his death I saw him walking with you in the garden at Hendon, and recognised him at once. I determined to see you again, but Mr. Calverley's death intervened, and—" He paused as he saw Alice pointing towards the door.

"Go," she said, "if you please—leave me at once, I must be left alone."

Mr. Wetter rose. He had made his coup, and he knew that then at least there was nothing further to be done. So he took up his hat, made a quiet and respectful bow, and left the room without uttering a word.

Then Alice flung her arms upon the table, and burying her head between them, gave way to the violence of her grief. What wild exclamations of rage and despair are those which she utters amidst her bursts and sobbings? What reproaches, what maledictions against him now discovered to be the author of her misery?

The only distinguishable words are, "Oh, my poor dear John! Oh, my dear old John!"